

FCC 96-317
Before the
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
Washington, DC 20554

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In the Matter of

Advanced Television Systems
and Their Impact upon the
Existing Television Broadcast
Service

MM Docket No. 87-268

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COMMENTS TO SIXTH FURTHER NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULE MAKING BY:
The Federal Law Enforcement Wireless Users Group
1800 G Street, N.W., Suite 1000
Washington, DC 20223

Submission Date: January 22, 1997

INTRODUCTION

The Federal Law Enforcement Wireless Users Group (FLEWUG), comprised of representatives from numerous federal law enforcement and public safety agencies, submitted comments regarding FCC's Notice Of Proposed Rulemaking (WT Docket Number 96-86). These comments supported the recommendations of the Public Safety Wireless Advisory Committee (PSWAC), which stated that public safety needs additional spectrum to perform their mission. The Public Safety Wireless Network (PSWN) Initiative was outlined describing how it evolved from a National Performance Review (NPR) Information Technology Initiative (IT-04) and a subsequent Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Department of the Treasury and the Department of Justice to address the wireless communications interoperability problems of the public safety community at all levels of government.

Our comments further explained how this will result in an implementation plan for a nationwide PSWN to be utilized by federal, state and local public safety agencies. As stated in our comments, the PSWN Initiative represents the first time that public safety agencies at

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all levels of government have been commissioned to resolve the long-standing issues of communication interoperability and tactical radio coverage. The Initiative serves to address the issues of interoperability, spectrum needs and efficiencies, and shared infrastructure and systems concepts. Our comments further explained the establishment of the Program Management Office (PMO) and outlined the importance of state and local participation in the planning process. We outlined the management plan and organizational structure of the PMO in some detail and provided information concerning the established reporting mechanism within the Government Information Technology Services (GITS) Board.

Comments

This document offers the FLEWUG members' responses to specific issues regarding the FCC Sixth Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, MM Docket #87-268, which we feel will likely have a direct impact upon the future needs and efforts outlined in the Public Safety Wireless Advisory Committee Final Report.

FCC Proposed Core Region

According to the FCC, the proposed core region plan yields 1578 new Digital Television (DTV) allotments in 878 communities throughout the United States and 140 additional allotments for non-commercial use. Under this plan, 270 MHz of spectrum between channels 7 and 51, inclusive, would be allotted for DTV broadcasting after transition from NTSC to DTV broadcasting is consummated. During transition, however, incumbent broadcasters' operations outside the core region would be fully protected.

In response to WT Docket Number 96-86, the FLEWUG filed comments supporting the recommendations contained in the PSWAC Final Report and requested that Channel 7 be reallocated for public safety use. In support of our previous comments, we strongly recommend an alternative core region proposal that does not include VHF Channel 7, such as Channel 8 through 52 which would retain 270 MHz of spectrum.

Access to Channel 7 spectrum would afford federal, state and local public safety agencies the opportunity to rapidly achieve interoperability at a relatively low cost. It is anticipated that existing land mobile radio equipment that currently operates in the 150-174 MHz band, could readily be converted to allow operation in the additional 6 MHz of adjacent spectrum soon to be vacated. The use of Channel 7 could provide immediate interoperability opportunities where the channel is not currently utilized.

Use of UHF Channels 60 through 69

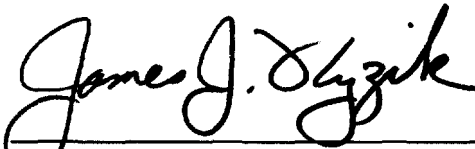
The FLEWUG strongly supports the immediate use of a portion of the spectrum between UHF Channels 60 through 69, in major metropolitan areas, to relieve the severe congestion currently being experienced by the public safety community.

Summary

The FLEWUG strongly supports the conclusions and recommendations of the PSWAC Final Report, and emphasizes the need for immediate spectrum relief for the public safety community.

The use of portions of the TV spectrum will afford the public safety community an opportunity to realize relief from spectrum congestion, while improving the capabilities for direct communications interoperability. Although close coordination and extensive planning would be required, some spectrum in both the VHF (Channel 7) and high UHF (Channels 60-69) bands could be utilized in the very near future.

The Federal Law Enforcement Wireless Users Group
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A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "James J. Flyzik". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath it.

James J. Flyzik
Chairperson, Government Information Technology
Services Board